

President's Corner

Environment through the Eyes of Youth

by Wayne Bell

I arrived home from China just a week ago. While my wife and I did spend nine days in travel to the Yellow Mountain, the famous terra cotta army near Xi'an, and the Forbidden City in Beijing, the reason for going in the first place was the 8th International Conference on Environmental Management of Enclosed Coastal Seas (EMECS 8). I have been involved with EMECS since its establishment two decades ago. Operating from a permanent center in Kobe, Japan, it is the only international forum that deliberately brings together scientists, policy makers, government officials, citizens from non-governmental organizations, educators, and students to exchange information for the purpose of improving environmental programs on the world's bays, estuaries, and sounds—our enclosed coastal seas. EMECS programs are punctuated by periodic conferences that have taken place in such locations as Kobe, Baltimore, Stockholm, Antalya (Turkey), Bangkok, Caen (France), and, most recently, Shanghai. Each forum concludes with a formal Conference Declaration that relates what was shared and learned to recommendations for the improvement of environmental policy.

The EMECS 6 conference in Bangkok introduced a new initiative, the Students and Schools Partnership (SSP), which brought K-12 schools and college undergraduates under the EMECS umbrella. Several middle school students joined two Washington College undergraduates at

(President's Corner continues on page 2)

Inside This Issue:

President's Corner	1
2009 Conference	1
MOS Travel Program Update	1
Birder's Wedding	2
Birds of Note	3
Chapter Chatter	4
Conservation Connection	6
Remembering Kathy Klimkiewicz ...	6
Calendar	7
Book Review: <i>Supremely Bad Idea</i> ..	12
Last Call	12



The Maryland Yellowthroat

Newsletter of the Maryland Ornithological Society

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2009

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CONFERENCE 2009: MAY 15-17

REGISTRATION BROCHURES COMING IN JANUARY

The 62nd annual MOS Conference will take place in Frederick in May, during the peak of spring migration. Over the last three years, the Frederick May Count has averaged 140 species and tallied a total of 162 different species.

Field trips will include visits to the C&O Canal along the Potomac River, Lilypons Water Gardens with its ponds and woodlands, and the Frederick watershed in the Catocin mountains. New this year will be a Bike'n'Bird Trip along the C&O Canal from Brunswick to north of Harpers Ferry (16 miles round trip). A specialized sparrow field trip will reinforce Jim Rising's Friday workshop; Jim, along with Bonnie Ott, will lead. Lister's Trips will spread out to blanket Frederick, Washington, and Carroll Counties. And Wil Herschberger will lead a photography field trip. If you are willing to lead a trip or act as guide for an out-of-county field trip leader, contact Frederick County's Kathy Calvert, Kathycalvert1@comcast.net.

Maryanne Dolan is looking for exciting prizes for the raffle; any suggestions for raffle items or services would be appreciated. She also would welcome bird-related donations for the Silent Auction. Contact Maryanne (Maryanne.dolan@gmail.com) if you are willing to help out during the conference.

Look for your registration brochure in January's mail. Remember that you can request the Sparrow Workshop and Field Trip via the form contained in your registration

brochure; they will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis. Contact me at janetbill@prodigy.net with any questions.

As you can see, we have many interesting activities on tap. Hope to see you in May.

—Janet Shields, Chair
Conference Committee

Travel Program Update: Good News, Bad News

The bad news first. We all have had to tighten our belts of late, and our Travel Program has been another casualty of the downturn in the economy. We were forced to cancel the Oaxaca trip, even though it had generated a lot of interest. The trip was almost full, but some folks who really wanted to go had to cancel to conserve their travel money this year. I am hopeful that we can offer this fun trip again in 2010, when (when, not if, says the eternal optimist in me) things are better for us.

The good news is that the Texas trip is still on, and we still have a couple of spots open. Please join us for this fun Taste of Texas, April 4-11, 2009. I also note that airfares to Houston are down from what they were a couple of months ago—Hooray!

Please contact me at mebalestri@comcast.net for information and registration forms.

—Marcia Balestri

President's Corner (continued from page 1)

EMECS 7 in Caen, where they presented the results of field research and hands-on environmental education programs involving the relationship between birds and the working landscape of the Chesapeake Bay watershed. EMECS 7 also saw the first Student Declaration, a decree separate from the Conference Declaration, reflecting the perspective of the young participants. I thought you might be interested in a sneak preview the second Student Declaration, from EMECS 8. While it does not address birds directly, it does relate to environmental education in general and certainly transcends the coastal seas that are the homes of its authors.

By way of introduction, the students and teachers who participated in the EMECS 8 SSP represented the equivalent of middle schools, high schools, and undergraduate liberal arts colleges. A special day-long conference was followed by an excursion to Sanlie Middle School, a certified National Green School on Chongming Island in the Yangtze River estuary. I learned that "green" is an international color and that youth's concern for the environment transcends political systems. The hearts of the most hardened researchers and politicians melted when confronted by the dreams of the next

generation. As a high school student from Thailand told us, "The hands of youth have the power to change the world."

Here is the Student Declaration, as read in English and Chinese by SSP students on October 30, 2008, at the closing ceremony of EMECS 8 in Shanghai, China:

"This student declaration is the combined effort of many students from the various countries of China, Japan, Thailand, and the United States. We are very proud to have had the opportunity to participate in EMECS 8.

"We wish to expand on the theme of the previous EMECS 7 conference, 'Our shared responsibility.' Responsibility to us is a state of mind, but it is not enough to address the needs of the environment. We want to go a step further to 'Our shared action.' Thoughtful action must be taken if we are going to make any difference in our coastal areas and oceans.

"Scientists, you must take action to involve the community in your research. Your research will have much more of an impact if you include others. This will also have the effect of causing others to learn about the surrounding environment and the care about what impact they have on it.

"Students, we must also take action, utilizing youth power, the talents and energy that this generation has, in order to have an effect. We must share the knowledge and ideas we have with others, teaching what we know about enclosed coastal seas in order to demonstrate to others how we can save our world and our seas by our hands.

"Teachers, you can take action by being the bridge between students and scientists.

You should tell students what the benefit of research on the sea is. Also, you need to educate students what to do and how to do it, as well as what consequences their actions will have on the environment. Because so many people live near the sea, there is a great opportunity to educate children on how their actions affect the sea, as well as how it affects them.

"It is easy to feel powerless about how one can make a difference in the environment. Governments, who make the final decisions about the environment, often seem out of reach and unwilling to listen to our concerns. However, if we take action and involve community members in the work that we are so passionate about, we believe they will slowly begin to listen. Like a drop of water falling into a lake, the effect is small at first but soon grows into large ripples. In the same way, we believe involving members of the community will be the small change that will soon grow much larger as they educate their families and others about what they have learned.

"We all have a 'green mind,' but in order to make a difference we must take action and share this mindset with others. In this way, we believe we can all create a truly sustainable future for our coastal seas, as well as change the world."

The Shanghai Conference Declaration, and further information about this and past EMECS conferences, can be found at the web site for the International EMECS Center, <http://www.emecs.or.jp>. The next conference is planned for Baltimore in May 2011, and I hope the MOS can be an active participant.

The Maryland Yellowthroat

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Anyone is welcome to contribute articles or ideas that would be of interest to other birders. Copy may be mailed or e-mailed to Lydia Schindler by January 20, 2009 for the March/April 2009 issue.

Illustrations pages 1 and 4 © M. Suzanne Probst.
Photograph page 3 © George Jett.



Photo: Back, left to right: Dave Powell, Mikey Lutmerding, Stan Arnold (doing Barred Owl calls), John Hubbell, Matt Tillett, Jim Brighton, Hans Holbrook. Front and middle, left to right: Ed Boyd, Tom Feild, J.B. Churchill (blue shirt), Mike Burchett, Jim Stasz, and Mr. and Mrs. Hubick.

Bringing a happy conclusion to an elaborate 9-year courtship dance, Bill Hubick married his long-term, birding-friendly fiancée Becky on October 8. Bill proposed to Becky on a pyramid at Monte Alban in Oaxaca, Mexico, in March and they completed a month of wedding celebrations on October 25. Highlights of the final, epic bash included surprising the gang's fearless leader, Jim Stasz, by celebrating his birthday and seeing this rabble of birding friends almost presentable. Seeing all these guys dressed up at the same time is a rare sighting indeed! Rested and recovered from the festivities, Bill and Becky are now happily mated for life.



Birds of Note—by Les Roslund

- The Worcester County Rarities Roundup on Nov 15 yielded numerous great sightings. Topping the list was a briefly viewed **ASH-THROATED FLYCATCHER** that Tom Feild found in an unremarkable housing area on 120th St in Ocean City. Tom and those with him saw the bird well enough to ID it, and they managed to obtain good photos. But the bird quickly moved out of the area and was not found again, despite considerable effort.
- A Roundup preview search of Worcester County on Nov 9 turned up an **AUDUBON'S WARBLER**, the Western version of the Yellow-rumped Warbler, rarely found in our region. Jim Stasz was the first one of a group of birders to recognize the "different" warbler amongst a group of ground-feeding Yellow-rumps close to the water at Bayside, North Assateague. The bird did not linger long, but on Nov 15 Bill Hubick found an **AUDUBON'S WARBLER** at Riddle Farm in Worcester County; most likely it was the same bird.
- Turkey Point in Elk Neck State Park, Cecil County, is known to be an excellent birding site during hawk migration in the fall. It can also be a splendid place for observing other fall migrants when the winds are favorable. Sean McCandless of Elkton, Cecil County, found the right conditions on Nov 11, when he managed to hear and see the first **WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILL** of the season as well as two **COMMON REDPOLLS**. All three birds were vocalizing nicely but otherwise were loners flying around by themselves near the Point before eventually crossing the river.
- Kevin Graff reported the first **COMMON REDPOLL** of the season on Oct 23 at Druid Ridge Cemetery, Baltimore County. It was in a large mixed flock of sparrows, finches, and other woodland species feeding on and beside the road, but the flock soon dispersed due to arrival of two **RED-TAILED HAWKS**. After the hawks left, some of the small birds returned, but the redpoll was not amongst them. The bird was not relocated.
- The first **RED CROSSBILL** of the season showed up amongst the plethora of exciting species found in Worcester County on Nov 15. Jim Stasz picked out the call of the bird as it flew overhead above Bayside, Assateague Island. Unfortunately, it did not stay around long enough to be enjoyed by others.
- Another Worcester County Rarities bird, a **BREWER'S BLACKBIRD**, did stay long enough to provide views for several birders. Bill Hubick found this one at the Berlin Sewage ponds. It was in the company of three **RUSTY BLACKBIRDS** but could be clearly



Snowy Owl seen on Assateague Island. Photograph taken on November 11, 2008 courtesy of George Jett.

distinguished from them because of its glossy sheen. Good photographs were taken and the bird was found again at the same site on Nov 17.

- **SNOWY OWLS** usually start showing up in our region in November, and this year the birds have been right on schedule. The first **SNOWY OWL** was seen three times near Cordova in Talbot County by Chris Dorset of Cordova. Her first sighting was on Nov 1 and the last was on Nov 13. All three sightings were within two miles of Chris's yard, so she came very close to having **SNOWY OWL** as a yard bird. A second **SNOWY OWL** was found Nov 7 at the north end of Assateague Island, Worcester County; this bird was photographed by a co-worker of Chris Bennett of Delaware. Chris forwarded the report to friends in MD. The Assateague bird was still "on territory" as of Dec 6, so it was seen by numerous MD birders. On Nov 10 a **SNOWY OWL** showed up on Poplar Island in Talbot County and was reported by Jan Reese of St. Michaels. The Poplar Island owl was still present as of Dec 9; by then it had played host to a second boatload of visitors who made special excursions out to the island just to see the bird. Kevin Graff led the group for the visit, Dan Haas for the second.



ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY

Leo Weigant spent 3 weeks camping, visiting friends, and birding in New Mexico. The “best bird” and the “most unexpected bird” was one and the same, a Long-tailed Jaeger near Fort Sumner. Other good sightings included Lewis’s Woodpecker, a flock of 100 Sandhill Cranes, and Black-chinned and Rufous-crowned Sparrows, along with a flock of Mexican Jays. While camping in the Wild Rivers Gorge north of Taos, Leo listened to a flock of Pinyon Jays and dozens of Townsend’s Solitaires. Then suddenly a Rocky Mountain Bighorn sheep walked within yards of the picnic table. There was one other non-avian, totally unexpected sighting. After checking out some Redheads, cranes, a Prairie Falcon, and a coyote, Leo was packing up his scope at the foot of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains when a voice called out “Leo Weigant!! Whatever are you doing here?!” It was Emily Joyce (also from AABC), who had stopped at the Las Vegas NWR on her way from Santa Fe to Taos.

Remembering *Gladys Lambert*: The first time I remember meeting Gladys was at Huntley Meadows. *Kathie Lambert* and husband *Brian Bowie* were on the club trip as well. I was a relatively new birder and the Lambert/Bowies “took me in.” That’s the way they are, and Gladys was the center of the family. She loved birding, and we spent many hours together at Chincoteague, in The Soo (Sault Ste Marie) where she was The Lady in Blue, and in Alaska. I will never forget that trip. Gladys and I were roommates because the two of us are not morning people; it turned out to be a good match. Recently Gladys, Kathie, and I went to find the elusive Saw-whet Owl. Gladys was always a willing participant. She had a love of life and nature and was ready to go, even with aches and pains. She loved flowers and spent a lot of time photographing wildflowers in Maryland and also in Alaska. She did a slide show of her

Maryland photos for the Perennial Garden Club, of which she was a member. Gladys was also artistic and designed the winning entry for the MOS pin contest (a Ruby-throated Hummingbird) in 2000. She was always doing something new, and her enthusiasm was contagious. She was honest, to the point, and willing to give advice when consulted. She was a good friend, mother, and grandmother. Although we will miss her, we will never forget her.

—Bobbi Reichwein

Brazil: Peter Hanan led another one of his Maniac Birding tours for AABC to Brazil, with the help of *International Expeditions*. Maniacs included Jean Wheeler, Bobbi Reichwein, Doug Forsell, Gerald Winegrad, Lloyd Lewis, and Kim Hudyma. David Herrema and Vicky Van Meter, Californian friends of the Hanans, joined the group. The NBS (non-birding spouses) Barbara Hanan, Gene Hudyma, and Carol Swan worked hard to keep the birders from getting into too much trouble.

We traveled to three different areas. First stop was Itatiaia NP in the Atlantic rain forest; we spotted 41 of the many rare endemics in this area. After an overnight in Rio, at Ipanema Beach, we flew to one of the wonders of the world, Iguacu Falls; we stayed on the Brazilian side where you look out and up at the falls. Here, in addition to spectacular birds, we were surrounded by thousands of butterflies, a reputed 700+ species. We spent a day on the Argentina side to work on another country list just to confuse us even more! Our last area was the Pantanal, the largest freshwater marsh on earth. It was HOT and humid! Temps climbed over 100 by 10 AM. We had lunch at 11 AM and were poolside and having siesta until 4 PM when we ventured out again.

We did see a few birds. Over 300 species! I’ve done tropical birding, but Brazil was almost a completely new set of species—probably more than 250 for me. A few highlights were Greater Rhea, Southern Screamer, Bare-faced Curassow, Hyacinth Macaw, Great Potoo with chick (great looks and photos), Frilled Coquette, Black-breasted Plovercrest (a leking hummingbird), Spot-back Puffbird, Robust Woodpecker (watch out Pileated), Saffron Toucanet, Red-billed Scythebill (a serious woodcreeper), 49 flycatchers species, Plush-crested Jay (a wild looking jay), and Scarlet-headed Blackbird.

Our mammal list was just as impressive: brown capuchin monkeys, tapir, crab-eating fox, giant anteater, yellow armadillo, capybara (world’s largest

rodent), agouti—and the big cat in the Pantanal, the *Jaguar*. Our first look at a Jaguar was at night spotted with a light. On the final day we saw one up close and personal. It was sitting in the woods (good view in a scope). Our guides decided we should bunch together and move as one and walk towards the cat and then back up onto the opposite shore of the small lake next to us. As we got to the closest point, the big cat stood up and started walking toward the lake. We backed up to the side of the lake with alacrity. We could see it well even without binoculars, and it filled the field of view in the scope. It sat by the lake looking at us, then walked into the lake and plopped down looking at us for a while longer. When the cat walked back toward the shade, we made a retreat to our vehicle. For a birding group that can be blasé with animals other than birds, the jaguar sighting was the highlight of the trip.

—Peter Hanan

CAROLINE COUNTY

Enrichment teacher Allison Vooris and a group of her Ecology students from Sudlersville Elementary School, Queen Anne’s Co, had the opportunity to participate in the Saw-whet Owl banding project at Adkins Arboretum run by Lori Byrnes. Students observed the entire banding process, staying till midnight. For more information about the project, go to <http://www.adkinsarboretum.org/research.html>.

—Debby Bennett

FREDERICK COUNTY

At our November meeting, the Frederick Bird Club was pleased to present our first backpack under the new YMOS program. Ben Humphrey, a 12-year old 7th grader, was openly surprised to receive a new pair of binoculars and other delightful birding tools in a handy backpack. Ben has developed an interest in birding because of his father Tom’s hawk-banding activities, and he has begun keeping a checklist of birds seen at his feeder. He joined the club on our recent field trip to Town Hill and found that identifying hawks at a distance is much more challenging than when they are in hand. We all look forward to spending a lot more time with Ben in the field. His enthusiasm is a joy and quite infectious.

—Kathy Calvert

HARFORD COUNTY

In October, *Lynn Feryus* took a small group trip to Australia for three weeks with *Naturalist Journeys*. As it is spring-time Down Under, the wildflowers—including many orchids—were blooming, the birds were nesting, and bowerbirds were decorating bowers. The areas we explored included Perth, Tasmania, and Cairns (with snorkeling on the Great Barrier Reef). The local guides were excellent, and the group saw all 12 Tasmanian endemics. We saw Fairy Penguins, intensely blue Fairy-wrens, many flashy parrots, Rainbow Bee-eaters, Willie Wagtails, a stately pair of Cassowaries, and numerous and difficult to separate honeyeaters. Yes, even a Kookaburra in a gum tree (they were common, often sitting on poles and wires). Lynn added about 245 new birds to her life list. The marsupial and mammal list was also extensive and included platypus, Tasmanian devils, wombats, flying foxes, and right whales.

—*Lynn Feryus*

HOWARD COUNTY

Sue Muller, a Natural Resource Technician for Howard County Recreation & Parks, recently received the county's 2008 Green Award for her outstanding environmental stewardship. Sue coordinates volunteer work dedicated to stream cleanup, tree planting, invasive weed control, nest box installation and monitoring, and environmental education. She served on the GreenFest committee and is the Natural Resources Division self-appointed recycling coordinator. She is currently giving seminars on how global warming is affecting Canadian polar bears. Congratulations to Sue!

Kate Tuft's article targeting beginning birders, "The Pastime, Passion, and Obsession," was published in the fall issue of *Drive, The Magazine From Subaru*. To read the article online, go to www.drive.subaru.com.

Licensed hummingbird banders *David Holmes* and *Bruce Peterjohn* banded a late Ruby-throated Hummingbird at a home east of Clarksville on November 7, 2008. This is a new confirmed late date for this species in Howard County.

—*Kate Tufts*

Ecuador: In August *Jane Coskgren* and I took our third trip to Ecuador. Having seen most of the commoner birds of the

country (and a fair number of the rarer ones), I had made a list of target species. The third (species of) bird that we saw was one of the targets: three Noble Snipe flushed from a boggy patch of sedge wetland at Papallacta Pass east of Quito. The new WildSumaco Lodge in the foothill forest proved to be excellent. Napo Sabrewing and Foothill Screech-Owl were two of the better birds—but the Straw-backed Tanager was completely out of range, and the pair of Buckley's Forest-Falcons hadn't read the books describing it as a lowland species. At Huaorani Indian Reserve in the Amazonian lowlands, Gareno Lodge gave us Fiery Topaz and Chestnut-winged Foliage-gleaner for an eleventh wedding anniversary present.

In the high paramo of Antisana Reserve, Black-winged Ground-Dove and Black-faced Ibis were the sought-for specialties. At the Angel Paz farm, we paid our respects to Maria, the Giant Antpitta we had met two years earlier. The Yellow-breasted Antpitta was shyer, and the ultra-rare Moustached Antpitta put in a brief appearance.

In the Choco rainforest on the Pacific slope, the new Canande Lodge of the Jocotoco Foundation gave us Plumbeous Forest-Falcon and Rose-faced Parrot, and near San Lorenzo, in the northwestern-most corner of Ecuador hard against the Colombian border, we had a rail bonanza, with four species: Uniform Crake, Gray-breasted Crake, White-throated Crake, and (mirabile dictu!) Brown Wood-Rail. A fifth species, the Ecuadorian Rail, was well seen at dawn as it ventured from the reedbeds along Lake Yahuarcocha in the inter-Andean valley as we returned to Quito. It was our last (68th!) life bird of the trip.

Our total for the trip (including a few heard-only birds) was a wonderful 503 species, including 47 hummingbirds and 47 tanagers. The scenery was magnificent, and during the 16 full days we spent, we ran into other tourists only once, a party of English birders at the Paz farm. For someone who is at all interested in botany, the flowers and trees are a never-ending source of fascination. Anyone who is interested in the natural world, and passes up a chance to visit Ecuador, is sadly in error. Go and see it!

—*Dennis Coskgren*

MONTGOMERY COUNTY

The new, second edition of "A Birder's Guide to Montgomery County, Maryland" is now available in area bookstores and from the American Birding Association.

Called "a fantastic job" by the ABA's Charlotte Goedsche, the thoroughly revised edition contains several new birding areas of interest to Marylanders everywhere, including the Blue Mash Nature Trail, Germantown Recreation Park, and Lois Green Conservation Area. All locations and maps were checked and updated by Montgomery Bird Club members. (The 2001 first edition sold out last year.) The ABA Bookstore price is \$17. To order copies directly, send an e-mail inquiry to Howard Lefkowitz at wa3vez@comcast.net.

In September, *Rob Gibbs* and *Mark England* co-led an Audubon Naturalist Society trip to Yellowstone National Park. The 13 participants saw excellent birds and wildlife, including a hunting Great Gray Owl, Trumpeter Swans, Lazuli Bunting, Green-tailed Towhee, Orange-crowned, Townsend's, and MacGillivray's Warblers, and a feeding flock of White-winged Crossbills.

Montgomery's Big Sit team, The Sitting Ducks, completed their seventh Big Sit competition on October 12 at Black Hill Regional Park near Boyds. Between 6:15 am and 12:45 pm, the team tallied 50 species. Three new species, Palm Warbler, Field Sparrow, and Chipping Sparrow, brought their 7-year total to 91.

Chapter Vice President *Steve Pretl* logged his 500th ABA area bird, a Gray Jay, on August 2 in Denali NP, Alaska. Steve was on a "nature and history" tour of Denali (not a birding tour) and was walking away from a reconstructed cabin when he heard a scratching noise and saw the milestone bird deep in a spruce grove.

—*Chris Wright*

TALBOT COUNTY

In late June I spent a week at the Maine Audubon Camp on Hog Island thanks to a generous scholarship from the Talbot County bird Club. Each day featured a new event, including a trip to beautiful Acadia NP, boat rides to seabird breeding colonies, and retracing the steps of Roger Tory Peterson. Night sessions included several presentations by Scott Weidensaul. Bird highlights included Common Eider, Roseate Tern, Arctic Tern, Razorbill, Black Guillemot, Atlantic Puffin, Purple Finch, Winter Wren, and at least 14 breeding warbler species. This was an opportunity of a lifetime.

—*Amanda Spears*

The Conservation Connection

by Kurt Schwarz



Deer and Public Water

The city of Baltimore has in place a program for deer hunting at Loch Raven and other city reservoirs. A recent letter to the editor in the (Baltimore) *Sun* accused the regulating authority of catering only to a blood-thirsty, trophy-coveting crowd. This is manifestly not the case. Anyone desirous of clean public drinking water should support this program.

Municipal water authorities establish forested buffer zones around their reservoirs to protect the water from pollutant run-off (e.g., from fertilizers and pesticides) and from soil erosion. Those forests are multi-level living organisms, with many component parts. When one component goes out of whack—say, when a herbivore

population, such as deer, explodes, through abundant food and lack of predators—that living system is compromised. The forest around Loch Raven is not being renewed. The younger generations of trees are being consumed by over-abundant deer, so as trees age and die, no new ones will be waiting to take their place. In addition, the forest floor has been denuded of vegetation, so pollutant run-off is no longer absorbed but instead flows into the reservoir. Similarly, water velocity is not braked by vegetation; the resultant soil erosion leads to increased turbidity (cloudiness) in the water.

In addition to the public health issues, we should all be aware of the havoc wreaked on the nesting habitat for ground and low-level nesting birds, such as Wood Thrush, Kentucky Warbler, and Ovenbird, all species in decline.

As distasteful as it may seem, the only effective means currently available for reducing deer herds are lethal ones—hunting or sharp-shooting. Numerous studies have proven deer population control by contraception to be ineffective in all but very isolated herds. The herds at Loch Raven and other reservoirs are not isolated; they freely wander in and out of reservoir property. In addition, no contraceptives have been approved for use in game animal populations. Trapping and relocating is expensive, impractical, and quite stressful to the deer themselves. Not only is trapping not humane, it only moves the problem elsewhere. Lethal population control is far more humane than allowing deer to starve to death when they exhaust their food supply.

M. Kathleen (Kathy) Klimkiewicz 1943 – 2008

Kathy Klimkiewicz, Biologist in the Bird Banding Laboratory at the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center in Laurel, Md., passed away on Thursday, November 6, 2008. She suffered from diabetes.

I first knew Kathy as a student in one of my ornithology classes at Radford College in Virginia in 1964. She was a good student and she soon became an avid birder. It was at this time that I was asked to form a chapter of the Virginia Society of Ornithology in Radford. Kathy helped me form the New River Valley Bird Club and was elected Secretary of the new organization. When I left Radford to come to the University of Maryland in 1964, Kathy took the lead in keeping the club active until she graduated with a Master's Degree in 1967.

Following graduation, she taught school for a couple of years, but her interest in birds led her to volunteer at the Patuxent Research Center one summer. In 1973 this led to a part-time job and, in 1974, to her appointment as Biologist in the Bird Banding Lab, where she remained until her death. Her first major task was to complete preparation of a bird banding manual.

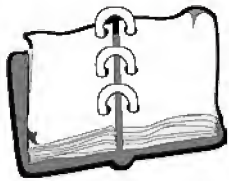
Kathy's contributions to the BBL and bird banding are too numerous to mention individually. She became a Master Bander in 1966 and used her extensive knowledge of bird banding to advance the goals of the BBL for more than 30 years. She was well known within the banding community and regularly attended meetings of the regional banding associations. Before health problems slowed her mobility, Kathy was an active birder and bander in both the Montgomery and Patuxent chapters of MOS. She unselfishly went out of her way to help foster an interest in birds within a number of young people in the DC area who later went on to successful careers or avocations in ornithology.

At one point in her career she was carrying out an important study of Purple Martins. That summer of 1971 turned out to be particularly wet and cool for some weeks during the breeding season. She reported finding only one surviving young bird in her study area. Lawrence Zeleney published a similar report in *Maryland Birdlife*. Purple Martins have not returned to their former numbers even now.

In the early 1970s, Chan Robbins brought the idea for a Maryland Breeding Bird Atlas home from some meetings in Europe. The techniques for this were initially tried out by Kathy in Montgomery County. She published her report in *Maryland Birdlife* (28:130-41, 1972). Another article by M. Kathleen Klimkiewicz and Joanne K. Solem, "The Breeding Bird Atlas of Montgomery and Howard Counties, Maryland" appeared in *Maryland Birdlife* in 1978 (34:3-39). These studies set the stage for the first Maryland Breeding Bird Atlas surveys from 1983 to 1987. Kathy served on the Editorial Board for the publication of the Atlas in 1996.

In addition to her love for birds, Kathy took great pride in raising award-winning dachshunds with her late parents. She also bred and won ribbons with her basenjis. She never married, but she is survived by two brothers and four sisters. She will be greatly missed by her family and the birding, banding, and show dog communities. Her family requests that any donations in her memory be made to the American Diabetes Association.

—Don Messersmith



MOS Calendar

January-February 2009

Thursday, January 1

H Baltimore. Loch Raven. Start the New Year birding. Varied habitats including woods, fields, and the reservoir. Probably also birding other sites for a "Big Day" in the Balt. vicinity. Meet 8:30 AM. Directions: From I-695, take exit 27 Dulaney Valley Rd north, go several miles, cross large bridge over reservoir, and bear right immediately. Continue to first left, Stone Hill Rd. Go about 100 yards, turn around, and then park on your right. All cars need to park on the same side of the road. Leader: Kevin Graff, 410-557-2456 or whitemarlin2001@yahoo.com.

H Howard. Start Your 2009 List. Half day. Plan to carpool to different locations to find as many species as possible. The one day of the year where every bird is new! Meet 8 AM at boat ramp of Centennial Park. Expect moderate walking. Possibility of lunch stop depending on the weather. Facilities at some spots. Leader: Bonnie Ott, 410-461-3361.

H Montgomery. Earliest Bird Walk, Georgetown Reservoir and DC Hotspots. Half day. Start the New Year right. Meet 8 AM at Georgetown Reservoir by the gate leading to the dike between the pools. Reservations required. Limit: 20. Leader: Mike Bowen, 301-530-5764.

Friday, January 2

MEETING. **Anne Arundel.** "Confessions of a Spice Merchant and Birder" by *Hank Kaestner*. 8 PM at Arlington Echo Outdoor Education Center, 975 Indian Landing Rd, Millersville.

Saturday, January 3

H Cecil. Eastern Neck NWR. Full day. Meet 7 AM at Big Elk Mall, Elkton at Dunkin' Donuts parking lot area. Leader: Parke John, parke@del.net.

Sunday, January 4

H Kent. Kick off your birding year with a half day at Eastern Neck NWR for waterfowl and winter landbirds. Meet 8 AM at Dollar General parking lot, Chestertown. Leaders: Walter Ellison and Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568 or rossgull@baybroadband.net.

CHRISTMAS COUNT. Annapolis/
Gibson Island.

CHRISTMAS COUNT. Sugarloaf.

CHRISTMAS COUNT. Fort Belvoir, VA.

Wednesday, January 7

H Baltimore. First Wednesdays at Fort McHenry. Monthly survey of bird activity at the wetland. Scopes useful. Automatically cancelled in bad weather (rain, sleet, snow, fog, etc). Directions: From I-695 southwest of the city, take I-95 north (exit 11), I-95, towards the city. Get off at exit 55, Hanover St. Turn right (east) on McComas St, left (north) on Key Hwy. Take first left onto Lawrence St and turn left onto Fort Ave, continue through gateway into the park. Meet outside the Visitor Center at 8 AM. Leader: Mary Chetelat, 410-665-0769.

Thursday, January 8

MEETING. **Frederick.** *Clive Harris*, an expert on gull identification from Montgomery Co, will help us learn those tricky gulls. 7 PM at the C. Burr Artz Library, Frederick.

MEETING. **Howard.** "In Search of My Zornis," by *Hank Kaestner*. Spending ten days in newly opened parts of India, Hank and his brother Peter saw 300 species of specialty birds. Hospitality and club bookstore 7:30 PM; meeting/program 8 PM at Glenwood Community Center, 2400 Rte 97, Cooksville. Info: Tom Miller, 410-795-7005.

H Indicates Field Trip

Friday, January 9

MEETING. **Harford.** *Jean Wheeler*, Harford Bird Club member and world traveler, presents "From Bel Air to Brazil, A Trip For the Birds." 7 PM at the Churchville Presbyterian Church, 2844 Churchville Rd, Churchville. Contact Russ Kovach at 443-386-4787 or Russell.Kovach@gmail.com for more info.

Saturday, January 10

H Harford. Harford County Feeder Tour. What better way to start your year off and get into birding? Join leader Lynn Feryus and other hosts as they point out all that beginner birders need to know when looking out their home windows onto feeder areas. From the meeting location we'll carpool to our first host's home, where we'll perch in the warmth and view their bird feeder spread for an hour or so before migrating on to the next. Participation is limited, though, and beginner birders are particularly welcome, so please contact Lynn at 410-877-7928 to reserve your spot and receive further info.

H Montgomery. Introduction to the Winter Shore: Ocean City to Broadkill Marsh. Full day. We'll brave winter's icy blasts for the chance to see some seasonal specialties: scoters, eiders, Harlequin Duck, loons, Bonaparte's Gull, Purple Sandpiper. New members and new birders are encouraged but all are welcome. Meet at 8:30 AM at the Ocean City Inlet parking lot. Limit: 12. Carpooling strongly encouraged. Reservations required. Leader: Mike Bowen, 301-530-5764.

Sunday, January 11

COVERED DISH DINNER AND LECTURE. **Baltimore.** 5 PM at BYKOTA Center in Towson (formerly Towson ES). Annual potluck dinner. Guest speaker *Hank Kaestner*, birder and world traveler extraordinaire, will share his latest foreign adventures in a slide presentation, "The Search for My Zornis: Bird-watching Adventure at Eaglenest Wildlife Sanctuary in the Restricted Access Areas of Extreme

MOS Calendar (continued from page 7)

Northeastern India." High adventure and unusual birds! For reservations and food coordination, contact Kevin Graff, 410-557-2456 or Whitemarlin2001@yahoo.com.

✿ **AUDREY CARROLL MID-WINTER COUNT. Frederick.** Meet at the Sanctuary at 6:30 AM. Dress warmly with waterproof boots. Call David Smith, 410-549-7082, for info.

🏠 **Tri-County. MD and DE Coast.** Full day. Search for winter specialties and perhaps a rarity from recent CBCs. Bring a lunch. Meet 7:30 AM at Ward Museum parking lot. Contact leader Sam Dyke, 410-742-5497, for directions and more details.

Tuesday, January 13

MEETING. **Allegany/Garrett. Aimee Haskew** from the Appalachian Laboratory will present "Bats in Maryland," a basic introduction to bats and some of the local conservation threats they face (e.g., Rails-to-Trails bike trail, wind energy, and white noise syndrome). 7 PM at Allegany Co Main Library, 31 Washington St, Cumberland (across the street from the Board of Ed. Bldg.), 301-777-1200.

MEETING. **Patuxent.** "Birding Adventures in Exotic Lands" with **Hank Kaestner**. Few birders or naturalists can match the world-wide birding experience of Hank Kaestner. Come learn more about his travels across the globe and the bird and wildlife he has encountered along the way. The formal program always begins at 7:30 PM, but doors open at 7 PM for informal conversation, refreshments, and exchange of birding news. Location: College Park Airport Annex. For more info, call Maureen Blades at 301-262-5148.

Thursday, January 15

MEETING. **Caroline.** Movie night. Title TBA. 7:30 PM, Caroline Co Library, 100 Market St, Denton.

Thursday, January 15 and Saturday, January 17

🏠 **Montgomery.** Gull Workshop. Meet 7:30 PM at Cyndie Loeper's house for light fare and a Gull slide presentation by *Clive Harris*. Then join him for the associated field trip on Sat. All are welcome for either or both sessions. Call Cyndie for directions, field trip details, and required reservations: 301-530-8226.

Saturday, January 17

✿ **C&O CANAL COUNT. Allegany/Garrett.** Again this year the C&O Canal Count will replace Allegany Co's mid-winter bird count (which has been discontinued). Contact Peter Vankevich at petevankevich@gmail.com for a stretch of the canal to cover. Each mile of the canal is counted separately.

🏠 **Baltimore.** Saturday Monitoring Walks at Fort McHenry. A continuing survey of bird activity at the Fort. See Jan 7 listing for directions. Meet 8 AM in Visitor Center parking lot. Cancelled in bad weather (high winds, fog, rain, etc). Leader: Jim Peters, 410-429-0966.

✿ **MID-WINTER COUNT. Baltimore.** To participate in post-migration bird count in your choice of location in Balt. City or Co, call Pete Webb, 410-486-1217 or pete_webb@juno.com.

🏠 **Cecil.** Ocean City and Beyond. Full Day. Meet 6 AM at Big Elk Mall, Elkton, at Dunkin' Donuts parking lot. Leader: Sean McCandless, seanmccandless1@comcast.net.

🏠 **Harford.** Conowingo Gull Watch. Just when the post-holiday season blues have got you in their sights, you can count on Les Eastman to get you some gulls up at the dam. The hydro-electric fish Cuisinart rarely disappoints pulling in good numbers of waterfowl and Bald Eagles as well as such rarities as Black-legged Kittiwake, Glaucous, Iceland, Thayer's, and Black-headed Gulls. Bundle up and meet Les at the parking lot closest to the dam at 8 AM. Call for more info at 410-734-6969.

🏠 **Patuxent.** Ocean City Inlet to Cape Henlopen. Gulls, waterfowl, and seabirds on this popular midwinter trip to the ocean beaches and inlets. Contact Fred Shaffer at 410-721-1744 for add'l info and reservations. Meet at the Bowie P&R at 7 AM to carpool.

✿ **C&O CANAL COUNT. Washington.** Contact Shirley Ford at 301-241-3020 to help.

Sunday, January 18

🏠 **Anne Arundel.** Annapolis Neck and Thomas Pt. Waterfowl and Soup Social. Meet 12 PM. Reservations required by Jan 14. Contact leader/host Gerald Weingrad, 410-280-8956, for meeting location and details.

✿ **FRED ARCHIBALD MID-WINTER COUNT. Frederick.** Meet at the sanctuary at 6:30 AM. Dress warmly and wear waterproof boots. Contact Bob Schaefer, 301-831-5660 or rjs30@erols.com, for more info.

Wednesday, January 21

MEETING. **Montgomery. Sally Wechsler** will present "The Colorado Chicken Run of 2007." 7:30 PM at Potomac Presbyterian Church, 10301 River Rd, Potomac. For more info, contact Steve Pretl at stevep@takomavillage.org.

🏠 **Montgomery.** Winter Sparrows at Blue Mash. Fox, White-crowned, and American Tree Sparrows are possible. Half day. Reservations required. Meet 8 AM at Zion Rd parking lot. If time permits, we may move on to a small brushy area close to Blue Mash and located within Rock Creek RP. For more info and reservations, call Leader: Andy Martin, 301-294-4805, 301-529-2066 (m), or apmartin2@comcast.net.

Saturday, January 24

✿ **C&O CANAL COUNT. Frederick.** Make-up date will be Jan 25 if the weather is bad. Contact Peter Vankevich, pvank@netacc.net, to participate.

Sunday, January 25

H Harford. Broad Creek Scout Camp. Join leaders Suzanne Procell and Marjie Heagy to search for winter finches among the evergreens at this popular reserve. In past years, cross-bills, Purple Finches, Pine Siskins, and other winter visitors have surprised the group. Meet at Dublin ES on Rte 136 in Dublin. Call Suzanne at 410-676-6602 for more info.

H Montgomery. Waterfowl for Beginners at Black Hill RP. Learn and review the basics of duck ID at this premiere county spot for winter waterfowl. The trip will be geared to new birders but all are welcome. Bring a scope if you have one. Meet 7:30 AM at the pull-off next to the Rte 121 bridge. Half day. No reservations needed. For more info or directions, call Dave Powell, 301-540-8776.

Monday, January 26

MEETING. **Tri-County.** *Kim Check*, Education Director at the Ward Museum, will speak about the museum's art and nature and children's programs. 7 PM at Asbury Methodist Church, Fox Rm, south entrance, Camden Ave, Salisbury.

Tuesday, January 27

POT LUCK DINNER AND MEETING. **Washington.** Pot Luck starts at 6:15 PM. Bring a dish to share along with your own drink, plate, and utensils. Afterwards enjoy a light-hearted film about the Boulders Colony of African Penguins near Simons Town, SA. Meeting starts 7:30 PM at the Mount Aetna Nature Center.

Saturday, January 31

H Cecil. Gull Watch. Half day. Meet 8 AM at North East Plaza near the Wal-Mart. Leader: Gene Scarpulla, ejscarp@comcast.net.

✳ MID-WINTER COUNT. **Harford.** Choose your location. Feeders are okay. Contact Mark Johnson at 410-692-5978 for more info.

H Montgomery. Blackwater NWR. Full day (to dusk). Bring food and warm drinks. Hoped-for species

include Cackling Goose, Ross's Goose, ducks, Rough-legged Hawk, Short-eared Owl, and Brown-headed Nuthatch. Will American White Pelicans winter again this year? Meet 8 AM at the new Visitor Center. Reservations required. Limit: 12. For reservations and directions, contact leader, Jim Green, 301-208-2393.

Sunday, February 1

✳ MID-WINTER COUNT. **Frederick.** Contact David Smith, 410-549-7082, to sign up. Tally Rally at the Smith's.

Tuesday, February 3

MEETING. **Baltimore.** Tuesday Evenings at Cromwell Valley. "Enhancing Your Yard for Wildlife." *Britt Slattery*, Senior Conservation Biologist with Audubon Maryland-DC, will give a slide presentation on how to design your yard with native plants and other features to attract and benefit birds and other wildlife. Directions: From I-695, take Exit 29A/Cromwell Bridge Rd and turn north (away from the city) onto Cromwell Bridge Rd. At 1.4 miles, turn left at sign for "Sherwood Farm." Follow entrance road, then turn right after bridge and follow loop as it curves left, right, and left again to parking on the right. Walk further along the road through the stone arch to the Sherwood House entrance door on the left. Inside the door, refreshments will be in a room on your left, library and lecture room on your right. Doors open at the Sherwood House at 7 PM for socializing and snacks, show starts about 7:45 or 8 PM. Info: Pete Webb, pete_webb@juno.com.

Wednesday, February 4

H Baltimore. First Wednesdays at Fort McHenry. Monthly survey of bird activity at the wetland. Scope can be useful. Automatically cancelled in bad weather (rain, sleet, snow, fog, etc.). See Jan 7 listing for directions. Meet outside the Visitor Center 8 AM. Leader: Mary Chetelat, 410-665-0769.

Thursday, February 5

MEETING. **Frederick.** Members' Night. This is a chance for members to bring in a few slides of a favorite birding activity to share with the group. Collectively, we travel far and wide and do lots of interesting things. Call Kathy Calvert at 301-698-1298 if you would like to participate. 7 PM at the C. Burr Artz Library, Frederick.

Friday, February 6

MEETING. **Anne Arundel.** "Ducks Unlimited: Conserving Waterfowl" by *Steve Linhard*. 8 PM at Arlington Echo Outdoor Education Center, 975 Indian Landing Rd, Millersville.

Saturday, February 7

H Cecil. Winter at Fair Hill. Half day. Meet 8 AM at Fair Hill Nature Center, near covered bridge parking lot (fee required, \$3 MD residents, \$4 out-of-state visitors [bring small bills for honor box]). Enter Fair Hill off of Rte 273 and follow signs to the Nature Center. Leader: Rich Donham, donham@zoominternet.net.

✳ MID-WINTER COUNT. **Garrett.** Contact compiler Mikey Lutmerding at mikeycerw@yahoo.com or 301-707-7764 for more info and to get a territory.

H Harford. Bradenbaugh Flats. Bradenbaugh-born and raised, Dennis Kirkwood is the premiere guide to escort you through the bustling hedgerows and large open fields of this winter birding wonderland. The trip consists mostly of drive-and-stop birding, followed by a wrap-up at the Kirkwood's house featuring delicious homemade soup and breads. Ring-necked Duck, Horned Lark, and White-crowned and Savannah Sparrows, as well as Cackling Goose, are regulars; American Pipit, Snow Bunting, and Lapland Longspur are distinct possibilities. Meet at Jarrettsville ES at 8 AM. Contact Dennis at 410-692-5905 for more info.

MOS Calendar (continued from page 9)

Sunday, February 8

❄️ **MID-WINTER COUNT. Anne Arundel.** Take the day off from your usual chores and spend the day at your favorite birding spot, hunting down and counting all the birds you can find. Compiler: David Gillum, 410-266-5672.

🏠 **Baltimore.** Marshy Point Nature Center. Half day. Waterfowl, raptors, and passerines. Half-mile trail leads to point overlooking Dundee Creek. Boots advisable and scopes useful. Meet 9 AM at Nature Center parking lot. Directions: Exit Balt. Beltway (I-695) at Rte 702 S. Take 2nd exit, Chase/Eastern Blvd. Go 6 miles. Turn right at Marshy Pt. sign. Go 0.25 mile and turn left into parking lot. Leaders: Debbie Terry, 410-252-8771 or gt5s@bcpl.net, and Mary Byers, 410 686-7294 or baypuffin@hotmail.com.

❄️ **MID-WINTER COUNT. Kent.** Full day. Join the field crew or count in your neighborhood, anywhere in Kent Co. Contact one of the leaders, Nancy Martin and Walter Ellison, 410-778-9568 or rossgull@baybroadband.net, for more info.

Tuesday, February 10

MEETING. **Allegany/Garrett. David Yeany II** will describe the first field season of his research at Finzel Swamp Preserve in Garrett Co: "Community Analysis and Habitat Associations of Breeding Birds at Finzel Swamp, MD." Finzel Swamp possesses the right combination of characteristics to create a peatland habitat likened to those found at more northerly latitudes, and some research suggests that these southerly high-elevation wetlands boast equally unique communities of breeding birds. 7 PM at Allegany Co Main Library, 31 Washington St, Cumberland (across the street from the Board of Ed. Bldg), 301-777-1200.

MEETING. **Patuxent.** "Taking our Lumps and Moving On: Checklist Changes and the Nature of Life (Classification of Birds by DNA)" by *David Ziolkowski*. Learn more about the science behind what constitutes a

species and how birds are classified. The formal program begins at 7:30 PM, but doors open at 7 PM for informal conversation, refreshments, and exchange of birding news. Location: College Park Airport Annex. For more info, call Maureen Blades at 301-262-5148.

Thursday, February 12

MEETING. **Howard.** "Trogons and Motmots," by Kurt *Schwarz*. Western Mexico provided these and other life birds for Kurt. Hospitality and club bookstore 7:30 PM: meeting/program 8 PM at Howard Co Rec and Parks, 7210 Oakland Mills Rd, Columbia. Info: Tom Miller, 410-795-7005.

Saturday, February 14

🏠 **Baltimore.** Henlopen, DE to Ocean City, MD. Full day. Targeting loons, gannets, sea ducks, Great Cormorants, and Purple Sandpipers. Razorbill possible. Bundle up; this trip is usually brutally cold and windy. Meet 7 AM at Nursery Rd P&R, off Balt. Beltway (I-695) exit 8 (not 8A). Alternate meeting place 9:30 AM at the Lewes-Cape May Ferry passenger lot. Bring lunch. Leader: Pete Webb, 410-486-1217 or pete_webb@juno.com.

🏠 **Baltimore.** Saturday Monitoring Walks at Fort McHenry. A continuing survey of bird activity at the Fort. See Jan 7 listing for directions. Meet 8 AM in Visitor Center parking lot. Cancelled in bad weather (high winds, fog, rain, etc). Leader: Jim Peters, 410-429-0966.

❄️ **MID-WINTER COUNT. Cecil.** Full day. For info contact Sean McCandless, seanmccandless1@comcast.net.

🏠 **Harford.** Swan Harbor Park. Searching for open-field birds, waterfowl, and winter sparrows, leaders Tom Gibson and John Gallo will walk the park to find what is wintering in this interesting habitat. Dress for winter conditions, including wet footing. The group will gather in the parking lot by the Ag. Ed. Center at 7:30 AM. For more info, contact Tom Gibson at 410-734-4135.

Saturday-Monday, February 14-16

🏠 **Anne Arundel.** Annual Winter Birding Weekend. Ocean City, Chincoteague, and other Eastern Shore locations, depending on the birds. Reservations required by Feb 2. Contact leader Peter Hanan, 410-672-5672, for reservations, meeting place, and time.

Sunday, February 15

🏠 **Montgomery.** Lilypons/ New Design Road. We will be targeting wintering field birds, including Lapland Longspurs, as well as sparrows such as American Tree and White-crowned. Chance of lingering wetland birds such as rails at Lilypons if ponds are ice-free. Call leader for reservations (required) and more info. Leader: Gail Mackiernan, 301-989-1828.

Wednesday, February 18

MEETING. **Montgomery.** *Bill Young* will present "Going Postal: The Wonderful World of Bird Stamps." 7:30 PM at Potomac Presbyterian Church, 10301 River Rd, Potomac. For more info, contact Steve Pretl at stevepretl@takomavillage.org.

Thursday, February 19

MEETING. **Caroline.** "Blue Birds" presented by *Danny Poet*. 7:30 PM, Caroline Co Library, 100 Market St, Denton.

Saturday, February 21

🏠 **Anne Arundel.** Edgewater area for waterfowl and other beach birds. Meet at Parole P&R at 8 AM for this half-day trip. Leader: Fred Fallon, 301-249-1518.

🏠 **Cecil.** Hardcore Owling. Half day. Meet 4 AM at Big Elk Mall, Elkton at Dunkin Donuts parking lot area. Leader: Sean McCandless, seanmccandless1@comcast.net.

🏠 **Frederick.** Eastern Neck NWR and Kent County. Mike Welch will lead us around Kent Co hotspots including Eastern Neck NWR in search of Ross's Goose and other

wintering birds. Call Mike at 301-874-5828 if you plan to go.

H Harford. Cape May, NJ to Lewes, DE via the ferry. Leader Les Eastman will take the group over to NJ and ride the ferry back to Lewes for a mini-pelagic trip. Along the route, we will look for wintering specialties and any rarities being reported. Gannets and kittiwakes are possibilities. Meet 6:30 AM at the Rte 155/I-95 P&R near Havre de Grace. Contact Les at 410-734-6969 for info on this full day trip.

Sunday, February 22

H Kent. Blackwater NWR, Dorchester County. Prime wintering waterfowl and eagle country. Full day. Bring lunch. Meet 8 AM at Dollar General parking lot, Chestertown. Leaders: Walter Ellison and Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568 or rossgull@baybroadband.net.

H Montgomery. Lois Y. Green Conservation Park. Half day. Explore the varied habitats of this new 204-acre Montgomery Co park. Wintering songbirds/sparrows, woodpeckers, raptors, and waterfowl are possible. Meet 7:30 AM at parking lot on Snouffer School Rd, Gaithersburg. Reservations required. For detailed directions and reservations, call leader: Mark England, 240-252-4218 (home), 240-375-4500 (cell).

Monday, February 23

MEETING. **Tri-County.** Program TBA. 7 PM at Asbury Methodist Church, Fox Rm, south entrance, Camden Ave, Salisbury.

Tuesday, February 24

MEETING. **Washington.** Program TBA. 7:30 PM at the Mount Aetna Nature Center.

Sunday, March 1

H Harford. Loch Raven. Join veteran leader Dave Larkin to explore one of Baltimore's most scenic waterscapes. Just six miles north of downtown Towson, this reservoir and its surrounding forest are a magnet for pine-loving songbirds and waterfowl.

Ring-necked Duck, Red-breasted Nuthatch, and Fox Sparrow are likely. Meet 7:30 AM at the MD 152/MD 147 P&R. Contact Dave at 410-569-8319 for more details.

H Montgomery. Montgomery Waterfowl Tour. Full day. Gas is a bit cheaper, so let's do an unofficial waterbird survey of the county. Meet 8 AM at Violette's Lock parking lot to start on the Potomac River. From there we will check Seneca, Hughes Hollow, Edward's and White's Ferry before heading over to Black Hill RP, Zion Rd Pond, Triadelphia, Lake Needwood, and back to Violette's. Leader can take 5 people. If someone else volunteers to drive, we'll take more! Reservations required. Maybe switch to landbirding if everything still frozen. For more info, contact Andy Martin at apmartin2@comcast.net, 301-294-4805 or 301-529-2066 (cell).

Tuesday, March 3

MEETING. **Baltimore.** Tuesday Evenings at Cromwell Valley. "Birds and Natural History in Queensland, Australia." *Pierre Henkart*, President of the Anne Arundel Bird Club, describes birds and birding "down under" in the tropical parts of Australia. See Feb 3 listing for directions and program start time. Info: Pete Webb, pete_webb@juno.com.

Wednesday, March 4

H Baltimore. First Wednesdays at Fort McHenry. Monthly survey of bird activity at the wetland. Scope can be useful. Automatically cancelled in bad weather (rain, sleet, snow, fog, etc.). See Jan 7 for directions. Meet outside the Visitor Center 8 AM. Leader: Mary Chetelat, 410-665-0769.

Thursday, March 5

MEETING. **Frederick.** *Bob Schaeffer* will show photos and talk about his trips to Maine and Canada, including Bonaventure Is. and Nunavet, and a near-death experience at the hands of a Black Guillemot. 7 PM at the C. Burr Artz Library, Frederick.

Saturday, March 7

H Baltimore. Middle Creek WMA. All-day trip (bring lunch) to visit this major gathering place north of Lancaster, PA for Snow Geese and other waterfowl. There is also an excellent display of mounted birds at the Visitor Center. Note: Trip may go elsewhere if Middle Creek is frozen over. Meet 8 AM at Timonium P&R on Greenspring Dr/Deereco Rd off Timonium Rd just east of I-83. Leader: Kevin Graff, 410-557-2456 or whitemarlin2001@yahoo.com.

H Frederick. Timberdoodles at Audrey Carroll. David Smith will lead us on a search for American Woodcocks. Bring a flashlight. For info call David at 410-549-7082.

MOS BOARD MEETING. Time and location TBD. Contact Janet Shields at janetbill@prodigy.net for more info.

H Montgomery. Jug Bay, Prince George's County. Half day. Joint trip with ANS. Possible Rusty Blackbirds, migrating Wilson's Snipe, and courtship display of Osprey. Meet 8 AM. Call leader for details and driving instructions. Check ANS *News* for more info. Reservations required. Leader: John Bjerke, 240-401-1643.

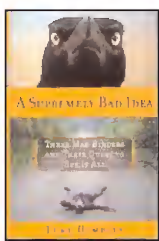
Sunday, March 8

H Anne Arundel. Wooten's Landing for woodcocks and breakfast. Meet 4:30 AM at Parole P&R. Leader: Kathie Lambert, 410-867-4056.

H Baltimore. Loch Raven. Waterfowl and landbirds. Possible Bald Eagles and bluebirds. Scopes useful. Two-mile, level walk. Meet 8:30 AM. See Jan 1 listing for directions. Beginning birders welcome. Leader: Debbie Terry, 410-252-8771 or gt5s2bcpl.net.

BOOK REVIEW

A Supremely Bad Idea: Three Mad Birders and Their Quest to See It All, Luke Dempsey • Bloomsbury USA, New York, 2008. 257 pages.



You would think that Luke Dempsey would be able in 14 words to convey an accurate idea of what this new birding book is all about. I assumed it was the latest in an

increasingly long line of breathless descriptions of "The Big Year." I was wrong.

What Dempsey, a Brit transplanted to New York City, has done instead is to pen a light but literate and amusing series of anecdotes about his travels with two birding companions as they strive to progress from mere beginners to more advanced birders. There will be a strong sense of déjà vu on the part of anyone, such as this reviewer, who has traveled to storied birding spots in North America in search of birds that often cannot be found (at least easily) elsewhere. The names themselves bring back fond memories: Garden Canyon and Patagonia, Arizona; Key Biscayne and Flamingo, Florida; Grayling and Tawas Point, Michigan. Between birding trips, our three protagonists return to their jobs

in the Big Apple, all the while dreaming about their next venture and the new birds they hope to snag.

Dempsey is at his best when describing the trio's feelings of desperation as they realize that they are not after all going to see their target Elegant Trogon, and the ensuing euphoria when they really do see one. We can sympathize easily with their frustration as they search in vain for the tiny settlement of Chapeño by the Rio Grande and so miss their one chance at Brown Jay. The author effectively depicts the awful tendency of birders to convince themselves that they have just glimpsed a life bird and to count it, when they probably didn't see it at all. He captures the unalloyed joy of the striving birder who identifies his 400th life bird (an Orange-crowned Warbler) without help from anyone else.

On the debit side, Dempsey is truly aggravating when he succumbs to what I call the "Jerry Seinfeld Show" syndrome. Uncomfortable motel rooms, undependable rental car GPS systems, unpleasant encounters with fellow birders or local yokels—all are

raised to the status of high drama. Our author has a distinctly antisocial side, which leads him into pointless arguments with bird tour leaders, overweight birders ("The Pregnants"), and sundry residents of country areas, who are portrayed not only as bird haters but as variants of Cro-Magnon man. He has regular and increasingly pointless discussions with one of his companions on the subject of Dempsey's distaste for tomatoes. These irritating moments are soon forgotten, however, as our heroes move on to new triumphs and disappointments at the next birding location. I found myself nodding in agreement at regular intervals, and recalling pleasant memories of similar moments in my own birding life.

Oh, and the "Supremely Bad Idea?" I know it's explained somewhere in the book, but I'm darned if I know where.

—D.H. Michael Bowen
Montgomery Bird Club

LAST CALL

... for the **Pin Contest**, deadline Jan 15.
Info on the web site or from John
Malcolm, smudgie@comcast.net.

... for **2008 Locality Lists**, deadline
Jan 20. Details on the web site
or from Norm Saunders,
marshhawk@verizon.net.

... for **Scholarships**, deadline Jan 30. Info
on the web site or from Tom Strikwerda,
tom.strikwerda@verizon.net.

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